

POETRY.

THE BEAUTIFUL LAND.

BY THOMAS MACKELLAR.

There is a land immortal,
The beautiful of lands;
Beside that ancient portal
A sentry grimly stands.
He only can undo it,
And open wide the door,
And mortals who pass through it,
Are mortals never more.

That glorious land is Heaven,
And Death the sentry grim;
The Lord thereof has given
The opening keys to him.
And ransomed spirits sighing,
And sorrowful for sin,
Do pass the gate in dying,
And freely enter in.

Though dark and drear the passage
That leadeth to the gate,
Yet grace comes with the message,
To souls that watch and wait;
And at the time appointed,
A messenger comes down,
And leads the Lord's anointed
From cross to glory's crown.

Their sighs are lost in singing,
They're blessed in their tears;
Their journey heavenward winging,
They leave on earth their fears.
Death like an angel seemeth:
'We welcome thee,' they cry;
Their face with glory beameth;
'Tis life for them to die.

YOUTHS DEPARTMENT.

The Dying Kiss.

I was but five years old when my mother died; but her image is as distinct to my recollection, now that twelve years have elapsed, as it was at the time of her death. I remember her as a pale, beautiful, gentle being, with a sweet smile, and a voice that was soft and cheerful when she praised me, and when I erred, (for I was a wild, thoughtless child,) there was a trembling mildness about it that always went to my little heart. And then she was so kind, so patient; methinks I can now see her large blue eyes moist with sorrow because of my childish waywardness; and hear her repeat, 'My child, how can you grieve me so?' I recollect she had for a long time been pale and feeble, and that sometimes there would come a bright spot on her cheek, which made her look so lovely that I thought she must be well. But when she sometimes spoke of dying, pressed me to her bosom and told me to be good when she was gone, and to love my father a great deal, and be kind to him, for he would have no one else to love. I recollect she was very sick all day, and my little hobby-horse and whip were laid aside, and I tried to be very quiet. I did not see her for the whole day, and it seemed very long. At night they told me my mother was too sick to kiss me, as she always used to do before I went to bed, and I must go without it. But I could not. I stole into the room, and lying my lips close to hers, whispered, 'Mother, mother, won't you kiss me?' Her lips were very cold; and when she put her arm around me, laid my head upon her bosom, and one hand upon my cheek, I felt a cold shuddering creep all over me. My father carried me from the room, but he could not speak. After they put me in bed, I lay a long while thinking. I feared that my mother would indeed die, for her cheek felt as my little sister's did when she died and they laid her in the ground. But the impressions of immortality are always indistinct in childhood, and I soon fell asleep. In the morning I hastened to my mother's room. A white napkin covered her face. I removed it—it was just as I feared. Her eyes were closed; her cheek was cold and hard, and only the lovely expression that always rested on her lips remained. In an instant all the little faults for which she had so often reproved me, rushed upon my mind. I longed to tell her how good I would always be if she would remain with me. She was buried, but my remembrance of the funeral is indistinct—I only retain the impressions which her precepts and example left upon my mind. I was a passionate, headstrong boy; but I never yielded to this turn of my disposition without fancying I saw her mild, tearful eye fixed upon me, just as she used to do in life. And then, when I had succeeded in overcoming it, her sweet smile of approbation beamed upon me, and I was happy. My whole character underwent a change, even from the moment of her death. Her spirit was

forever with me, strengthening my good resolutions and weakening my propensity to do evil. I felt that it would grieve her gentle spirit to see me err, and I could not, would not do it. I was the child of her affection, I knew she had prayed and wept over me, and that, even on the threshold of eternity, her affection for me had caused her gentle spirit to linger, that she might pray for me once more. I resolved to become all that she could desire. This resolution I have never forgotten. It helped me to subdue the waywardness of childhood, protected me through the temptations of youth, and will comfort and support me through the busier scenes of manhood. Whatever there is estimable in my character, I owe to the impressions of goodness made upon my infant mind by the exemplary conduct and faithful instruction of my excellent mother.—*Parent's Magazine.*

The Cup of Cold Water.

One morning in June, Mr. Arnold, the Minister of the parish, called at Mr. Cole's, and as he was wont, began to talk on the subject of religion. His manner was such as to render it pleasant, not repulsive. His heart was so full of love, and he was so earnest in his desires to promote his Master's cause, that even the most careless loved to hear him converse on the subject of religion.

Little Ellen, who was not quite five years old, loved Mr. Arnold very much. She thought he was the very best man in the world. When he came, she always took her little chair and sat beside him, and listened to what he said, as though she could understand it all; and she did understand much more than her friends supposed.

After Mr. Arnold had been sitting for some time, Ellen arose and went out at the door. As she did not immediately return, he said, 'Where is my little friend gone?' 'I don't know,' said Mrs. Cole, 'I never knew her to leave the room when you were here before, she will be back in a minute.'

Pretty soon, Ellen came in with a red face, and a tin cup full of cold water, which she gave to Mr. Arnold.

'Thank you, my dear,' said he, 'how did you know I was thirsty? It is deliciously cool.'

'Have you been to the spring,' said Mrs. Cole, knowing that there was no cool water in the house.

'Yes, ma'am,' said Ellen.

'I am very much obliged to you for your trouble,' said the Minister. When he had offered a brief prayer, he took his leave.

'What made you go, and get the cup of water for Mr. Arnold?' said Mrs. Cole to her daughter. Ellen seemed reluctant to give an answer, and her mother did not press it.

The matter continued to employ Mrs. Cole's thoughts, and pretty soon it occurred to her, that the passage of Scriptures read by Mr. Cole at morning prayers was the cause of Ellen's conduct in regard to the cup of water. 'Ellen, dear, said she, 'tell mother what led you to go to the spring? Was it what papa read in the Bible this morning?'

'Yes, ma'am,' said Ellen, in a low voice. The passage to which allusion was made was, 'whoever shall give to drink unto these little ones a cup of water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.'

'Do you expect a reward for giving Mr. Arnold a cup of water?'

'Yes, ma'am.'

'What kind of a reward do you expect?'

'I don't know, just as the good Lord sees fit to give.'

'Will the Lord reward every one, who gives Mr. Arnold a cup of cold water?'

'Yes, ma'am,' if you give it because he is a disciple, he will.'

Here was an example of simple confidence in God's promises, which we should all do well to imitate. And here was a regard to 'the recompense of a reward' which we should do well to imitate. You often do this person and that person a favor, in hope that he will do something for you in return. But you are often disappointed. You can never be certain of receiving a reward from man, for what you do for him. But there is no such uncertainty when you do things for God. 'Verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.'

Memory and Conscience.

[The following paragraphs on the association of memory and conscience are taken from a discourse by Rev. Dr. Beecher.]

Connected with conscience is the office of memory. The retrospections of the mind are as rapid as the flashing of lightning. More rapid are they than the transmission of ideas by the telegraph, between Washington and Baltimore, or than that transmission will be when, as such may happen, thoughts are carried in a few moments round the earth.

I knew a man who said, that in falling 20 feet, when he expected to die, the thoughts of a life-time seemed to pass through his mind. He thought of his business—of his wife—of his children—and of that eternity to which he was going. A life seemed to pass through his mind, and nothing was lost. So it will be when memory summons the acts of life, at the last tribunal. Nothing is lost. Thoughts once impressed, but apparently lost, will come out again. A life is written on our memory, as with invisible ink. It is apparently lost to our frail sight while here. But in the judgment light, it will be seen enveloped around us, and will be unrolled till every line and letter is made visible. I knew a sailor, once, who said that when once in a storm, on the giddy mast, while trying to furl a sail, and could not, he cursed God. It passed out of his mind for twenty years, but now, in a season of excitement, he said, 'Now I remember it, I am lost!'

Importance of Trifles.

In this world nothing is a trifle. A painter was one day copying a portrait of Rembrandt. He took off shadow after shadow, light after light, line upon line most accurately. Still the expression was wanting. Hundreds on hundreds of touches were valueless, till, by the aid of a microscope, he discovered one hair-like line below the eye; and this put in, the whole likeness came. So it is with all great things. It is only littleness of mind that cannot appreciate little things. On the eve of one of his great battles, the general, who almost alone in his age, has shown us what a great man is, was found sitting up in his tent, writing folio—upon what? on the comparative merits of tin and copper canisters, for soldiers' use. Look at the works of nature. Do they exhibit any contempt for trifles? What is the penciling of the flower, the plumage of the insect, the moulding of the leaf, the depth below depth of animated worlds, sinking down till sense is lost in tracing the minuteness of their structure—but a witness against the ignorant man, who thinks that in the sight of an Infinite Being anything can be little, when nothing can be great? Think of the human eye. It is the mirror of the mind, the telegraph of thought, the great actor in the pantomime of signs, by which we hold converse with our fellow men, and read their souls.

What is it but a little dot of light, shifting every moment, and forming an infinite variety of the minutest angels with the two ellipses of the eyelids? And yet by these slight variations we read the thoughts and passions of the mind within; as we read a whole world of truth, past, present, and future, of this world and of others, of man and of God, by little lines, and dots, and curves, and angles of hair's-breadth thickness in the forms of writing. So think how a little voice will decide the fate of nations, even in the most popular of governments, so long as a majority decides; and without such a majority there can be no society. Think how one trifling act, even the wavering of a thought, will give a bias to the mind, and lay the foundation of a habit which nothing afterwards can alter. Think how, in a course either of virtue or vice, all may be safe or unsafe, up to a certain point; when again one little act consolidates the habit forever. Before, there might be escape; now, there is none. Before, heaven might have been lost; now, it is gained forever. Think how our moral affections rest mainly on what men call trifles—how trifles irritate, trifles excite admiration, trifles provoke emulation, trifles rouse jealousy, trifles consolidate love, trifles are the proof of virtue, trifles indicate the habit; and in all these cases simply because they are trifles. Great occasions, violent temptations, gigantic efforts, superhuman prowess, these are rarely within our reach. And they are not required. They even diminish admiration. Our hearts are balanced on a point, and they will vibrate with a breath of air.—*Rev. William Sewell.*

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